

Public Accounts Committee

PAC(5)-08-16 PTN1

7 November 2016

Hospital Catering and Patient Nutrition: Additional information submitted from Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB)

During the evidence session on 17 October, the issue of the absence of a Halal menu at Royal Gwent Hospital was raised. ABUHB confirm that such a menu is always offered and an example is attached.

The issue of patients who are diabetic being informed to bring in their own meals was also raised. ABUHB advise that this is totally against their processes as they do not want to compromise food hygiene regulations by encouraging this practice. Diabetic menus are adaptive ones and ABUHB are not unique in not having a diabetic menu.

The standard menu is designed to offer high energy choices and 'healthier' options for patients with diabetes, obesity, heart disease. The healthier options on our menu meet the national criteria for total fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt and are coded accordingly.

ABUHB appreciate that Members may have garnered anecdotal comments via Facebook rather than quote genuine actual complaints submitted. One such comment referred to a television programme Nevill Hall Hospital took part in featuring celebrity chefs including James Martin. Whilst he was critical of catering services in several English Hospitals – he was extremely generous in his praise for the organisation and service quality at our site. His only complaint which became a bit of a crusade was about the absence of Welsh lamb on our menus. (This is down to affordability).

However ABUHB always welcome feedback and suggestions on how they can improve their catering services to the public. They will shortly be undertaking a large scale review of their patient menus and as part of that seek the views of patients, carers and appropriate staff.

Finally, ABUHB would like to invite the Committee Members to visit one of our hospitals to see hospital catering at the 'sharp end' and follow a meal from production to the patient.

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

20 October 2016